



From the Pastor

¹ You are to be praised, O God, in Zion; to you shall vows be fulfilled.

² To you, the one who answers prayer, to you all flesh shall come.

~Psalm 66:8, 16, 20

Nearly twenty (20!) years ago when I entered seminary, we were assigned a local Lutheran congregation to attend on Sundays. There we would

experience worship in a place that wasn't our home congregations, so we could gain new perspective; be fed lunch after worship every Sunday, so we could eat and practice pastoral visits; and teach two Sunday school lessons and preach twice, so we could practice those things too. Mine was at St. Paul's in Spring Grove, led by Pastor Biles.

I learned a lot from Pastor Biles, and the arrangement worked so well that I stayed a second year as a part-time staff person. He took church matters very seriously and his deep devotion remains admirable and inspiring. However, there was one time when, to me, it took a somewhat humorous turn.

On this particular Sunday morning, people felt especially moved by the choir anthem. Then it happened. People clapped. Now, for a few Sundays leading up to this one, a very restrained smattering of applause that carried the uncertainty of a child's first attempt at a bicycle could be heard cropping up here and there. This Sunday, the dam had erupted and it seemed nearly everyone was clapping. Pastor Biles stopped the service right then and there to explain to the good people of St. Paul's why we don't clap in worship. I was equal parts shocked, amused, and impressed.

I don't think I could ever stop a service and call people out for something like that. I stopped a service in 2020 when Joe Ludwik walked in, but that was Covid time. We were recording a couple of backup services to have on hand in case of emergency, only Heidi and Marlene were there until Joe accidentally came in and through the camera shot, and we just started over again. Anyhow, Pastor Biles wasn't wrong in his correction, but he wasn't completely right either.

There is a gray area of praise. What is crystal clear is God is the most worthy recipient of our praise. God has also created many wonders that deserve to inspire awe, like sunrises, babies, and music. God who created us in and for love, I believe wove into the fabric of our humanity and community the need and goodness for praising other people as one means of communicating love. However, there can become a tipping point when our praise of the created confuses our praise for the Creator. Perhaps an examination of a hymn can help illustrate this point.

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Pastor's Page (Continued)

With our nation's Semiquincentennial celebration this month, we will be using hymns that connect to the appointed Scripture readings on July 5, and also *America the Beautiful* as our closing hymn, because it makes for a beautiful prayer on behalf of our nation. On the other hand, we won't be using *My Country, 'Tis of Thee*, even though it is also a beautiful song. If you look at it's first two, maybe three, verses, then you will notice that their words of praise are directed to our nation and then in the final verse, the song praises God. In general, this is fine, as there is much good about our country that is commendable, and I'm glad that it also asks for God's blessing, as all lands should ask for God's blessing. However, in our worship service, offering direct praise of *anything* else, especially in our hymns, stands to possibly conflate the other object of praise, which in this case would be our nation, with God, whom the worship service is meant to praise. More simply put, praising our nation in the same breath as praising God in a worship service risks the confusion of putting them on the same level. This begins a slippery slope that could lead to making an idol of that thing, which in this example is our country, making it above reproach and holier than any other place, even though God and God's people are in every land. Commending what is good about our country at other times remains healthy and helpful, and even better is praising God for the blessings we experience because of the gift of living in the United States.

Adoring that which is created should lead to praise of the Creator. Admiring a painting without appreciating the skill of the painter would be ridiculous. The beauty of a sunrise points to the wonder of God's creativity. Even when the stands roar in applause for a diving catch, appreciation for the miracle of life God made and delight in it should rise with that crescendo for those of us who know God to be the author and illustrator of the universe. This brings us back to how Pastor Biles was simultaneously right and wrong, which was maybe very Lutheran of him.

Applause in worship, yes even for the children, carries some risk. We could confuse ourselves by subconsciously converting a worship service of God into a praise session of people. Similarly, pieces of the service, such as anthems, might begin to be thought of as performances instead of offerings to God and moments meant to draw us all together closer to God. Like so much of what we say and do, it is the intent of the heart that matters most. If our hearts intend to communicate through applause a thank you for this offering that drew us closer to God and to praise God for the God-given talents revealed in this music or dramatic presentation, then we applaud rightly and should continue to do so joyously. What remains most important is that no matter what else falls on a Sunday morning, whether they be secular holidays like Independence Day or Father's Day or magnificent presentations of music or dramas, God communicated to us in Jesus through the Holy Spirit should always remain at the heart of the day, the service, and our praise. May that be so no matter the day of the week.



St. Peter's friends and family welcomed Jace Max as our newest brother in Christ on Sunday, June 7th. Congratulations to proud parents, Chelsea and Joe, grandparents, Melissa & Ryan, and great-grandmother, Becky.

We also recognized Ethan Thomas on the occasion of his high school graduation. We celebrate his accomplishments and send our prayers with him.



Pirates Outing



Church Picnic



We had a rainy day for the church picnic this year, but our indoor gathering served as a very nice space to enjoy our picnic lunch. A special thank you to the Fellowship Committee for organizing this annual picnic and to everyone who stayed and brought things for our potluck!



We also had the opportunity to host missionary, Kristin Engstrom, as she visited from Madagascar. We enjoyed a very informative presentation and conversation. Thank you for your hospitality as we came together quickly to welcome Pastor Kristin and share time together.



Vacation Bible School



God is with us – fear not! We were blessed to host a wonderful community Vacation Bible School this year. It was a great turnout of children and volunteers alike. Pr. Mort captured so many wonderful photos that have been running on the TV in Luther Hall, so hopefully you were able to see all the fantastic moments he caught throughout the week. Here are just a few more for your enjoyment.



Children from our Kid Camp also travelled with Pr. Johns to Kadima to serve the patients there.



Softball Fan Appreciation Night



What a wonderful night we had cheering on the Apostles and celebrating the best fans! Food, games, fun, and even victory!

Upcoming Softball Games -

We have had a lot of reschedules so please double-check the calendar below for new dates.

Let Pastor know if you need help finding either field.

Go Apostles!

Game nights are July:

1st – 6:30 pm Slippery Rock MAC Fields

6th – 6:15 pm Middle Lancaster

9th – 6:15 pm Middle Lancaster

13th – 6:30 pm Slippery Rock MAC Fields



6th Annual Rege Rengers Cornhole Tournament



Announcements

500 Card Club – Friday, July 3rd at noon.
Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.
No experience needed! If you would like to learn to play, you are welcome to join in the fun. It's a pot luck event so bring whatever you would like to share.



Food Drive – Thank you to everyone who donated cleaning supplies in June. In July, we will focus on collecting toiletries.

Join us the 2nd Sunday of each month after worship to pack food for folks in our community in need of a little extra help each month.



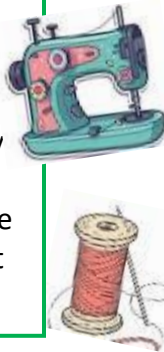
Join your church family and friends for our monthly lunch outing **Wednesday, July 8th at 12 pm**. This month's restaurant is **Back Home BBQ & Brew Co.**

Anyone is welcome to attend, please let Pastor Johns know how many will be joining from your party so he can pass the information along to RSVP.



Join us on **Saturday, July 18th** for the fun & fellowship of game night at 6:30 pm. You can bring and share drinks, snacks, & friends to participate!

Helen's Helpers & Nancy's Needlers meet once a month to work on sewing service projects. They are currently working on school kit bags. These sewers will be happy to have you join them. No experience necessary. There are tasks that can be done by all skill levels. This month they will meet on **Tuesday, July 14th at 10 am**.



On **Thursday, August 6th at 1:00 pm**, our Women's Circle groups will be meeting for a lunch and to string the school kit bags. There are 100 bags, so we welcome your help for the work, but also your company for the fellowship time that comes with joining together in mission and for a nice meal together as well.

Some of our young people were able to join our sewers this past month to help learn and make the bags for our school kits.



Peach Potluck - Join us after worship on **Sunday, July 19th** for this fun event! What can you bring? Please bring a peach-themed dish to share if able, and be prepared for many mouth-watering delights! The fellowship committee will provide paper plates, bowls, and silverware.



National Night Out will be held on **Wednesday, August 5th** from 6-8 pm at EDCO Park. The Evans City Community will be celebrating this national event with a free meal provided by our churches and free access to the pool. We hope to see you there.

Corn Roast – Our annual corn roast will be held on **Saturday, August 15th** at 5:30 pm.



Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.
The night's fun will include rounds of Bingo with prizes.

Financial Facts

May 2026 Contributions:

Fund Description	Amount
212 Food Cupboard	190.00
213 Synod Benevolence	1,477.20
228 Seminary	121.00
242 EDCO Park	40.00
299 Pastor's Disc. Fund	500.00
400 Current Fund Income	19,403.80
401 Music Fund Income	70.00
402 Memorial Fund Income	100.00
405 Flower Income	424.00
406 Youth Fund Income	448.96
407 Priority Project Income	1,439.00
408 After School Program Income	1,158.96
410 Campership Income	458.97
412 Manna Night	448.96
441 Church Outings Income	314.00
Grand Total	26,594.85



Our Monthly Benevolent Cause for May will support the **Evans City Public Library**. If you would like to support this cause please mark the "Other" line on your contribution envelope.

If you are interested in sponsoring altar flowers, we still have opportunities available in August, September, November, and December. Please see the posted flower chart in Luther Hall to sign up.



So far in 2026 we have completed at least 24 projects utilizing Thrivent Action Team cards. That's \$6,000 provided by Thrivent as seed money for the work of our congregation! Thank you to those who have led projects to support our mission. Reach out to the office if you would like assistance developing a project to use your Thrivent cards.



Through the generosity and teamwork of 19 of our Thrivent members and our VBS participants, we were able to assemble and donate 57 water filters that will help bring clean water to those in need.



2026 Contributions to Date:

Fund Description	Amount
211 Meals on Wheels	232.00
212 Food Cupboard	2,219.74
213 Synod Benevolence	6,954.90
217 ELCA Lutheran Prospect	138.76
218 Lutheran Service Society	215.66
228 Seminary	121.00
234 Sherri Ifft - Missionary	82.00
242 EDCO Park	429.00
245 Batten Disease	5.00
299 Pastor's Disc. Fund	500.00
400 Current Fund Income	75,435.86
401 Music Fund Income	814.00
402 Memorial Fund Income	1,000.00
405 Flower Income	2,045.00
406 Youth Fund Income	1,122.96
407 Priority Project Income	13,823.45
408 After School Program Income	7,337.96
410 Campership Income	1,528.47
412 Manna Night	488.96
421 Vacation Bible School	26.00
440 Softball Team Income	600.00
441 Church Outings Income	1,060.00
Grand Total	116,180.72

A Financial Update – To keep everyone informed about our current financial situation, the reconciled treasurers report of our current fund as of the end of May 2026 is as follows:

Current Fund \$1,201.44
 Memorial Fund \$11,497.05
 Youth Fund \$9,881.22
 Manna Fund \$6,957.61
 Priority Project Fund \$4,249.9
 After School Program \$7,880.47

Many thanks to those who continue to give to these funds which give us the ability to serve Christ and others.

Thoughts and Prayers

Cole Barkley
John, Summer, Timothy Barron & Family
Peter Barry
Debbie Beahm
Ricky Benson
Tom Broeren
Eilene Budisky
Kay Burr
Lisa Burr
Arlene Cameron
Jane Carruth (*Colon Cancer - B.Barkley*)
Luke Clawson
Donna Daugherty
David English (*Lung Cancer*)
Diane Fair
Michelle Follet & Family
Mary, Glenn, and David Fulghum
Lori Goodwin
Patti Grubbs
Joan Gump
Richard Hutchins (*Cancer*)
Annastyn Hogan
Stephanie Hogan
Ella Jason
Greg John
Val Kurth (*Breast Cancer*)
Todd Manuel (*Blood Cancer*)



Diane Marburger
Joe Marburger
Patty Marburger
Jane Mashuda
Diamond McCracken
Berty McMillen
Carmen and Sandra Morra
Cole Moretti (*Cancer*)
Matt Morris
Mark Phillips
Emma Plank
Jason Plank
Erin Price
Bill Puryear (*Cancer*)
Lori Rasp
Rick Reifenstein
Tammi Rossi
Dominick Scarpino
Pastor Tony Schneck
Kay Marburger Terry
Julie W
Garrie Wearing
Roland Wise
Pat Wolfe
Audray Muscatello Yost



INTERCESSIONS FOR CONSOLATION IN GRIEF

Members and friends who have entered the Church Triumphant in the previous 3 months:

The family of:
Pat Sammons

PRAYERS FOR OUR HOMEBOUND

Please contact the church office as soon as possible to request additions or changes.

Gini Rinkus
Nancy Zattiero



St. Peter's Lutheran Church Council Minutes

June 9, 2026

Present: Staci Bettencourt, Pat Capella, Patti Flach, Janice Hogan, Pastor Johns, Ted Lindgren II, Robin Plank (Zoom), Linda Schmidt, Robin VanDyke, Corey Walker, Marge Wearing

Absent: Bev Critchlow, Casey Guerriero

Devotions: President Ted Lindgren called the meeting to order at 7:12 P.M. Following this, the Pastor shared a variety of poems on a variety of topics including gratitude and God's creation . Discussion and prayers followed.

Minutes: The May meeting minutes were read and approved. Robin V. motioned to accept the minutes and it was seconded by Corey. Motion carried.

Reception of Visitors/Communications: None

Pastor's Report: A detailed, written report was submitted addressing, among many other items, two Baptisms, one on May 17th and another on June 7th. Pastor has also been appointed to serve a three-year term on the "Companion Engagement Team". He will represent Synod Region 8 of the ELCA.

Treasurer's Report and the Financial Secretary's Report: The May report was reviewed and discussed. The Current Fund is no longer in the red!

Financial: No written report was submitted.

Fellowship: No written report was submitted. Approximately 35 people attended the Pirate game on May 30th. The church picnic is scheduled for this Sunday, June 14th. This year's Cornhole Tournament will be held on June 27th. A Peach Potluck will follow our Sunday service on July 19th. A spaghetti dinner fundraiser may be held on October 3rd. The next Rummage Sale will be on September 18th and 19th. A C. S. Lewis' book was selected for the Summer Book Study.

Learning Ministry/Youth: No written report was submitted. Sunday School ended on May 17th. The Summer Mission Trip to Ocean City is planned for the week of July 19th. St. Peter's will host VBS this summer from June 15th-19th. Kid Kamp is also occurring during this week. Summer Book Study will begin on Sunday, June 21st.

Memorial: No written report was provided.

Mutual Ministry: No written report was provided. No official meeting was held.

Property: No written report was submitted. The railings on the Nave entrance are broken and need to be repaired. Work Day was held on Saturday, May 16th.

Worship and Music: No written report was submitted. June 14th will be the last Sunday for the church choir. Setting #8 will begin on June 21st. An outdoor service for the summer is also being planned, possibly on July 26th. Upcoming services include the following: Church Picnic-6/14

Other Official Reports:

Unfinished Business:

Bathroom Project: Finishing this project has taken more time than expected. Work is continuing.

Upper Parking Lot Project: The first quarter of the grant's check from the Synod has been received. The work needs to be rescheduled by the company.

New Business/Miscellaneous:

Synod Assembly Delegates: Charlie and Patti Flach will be replacing Casey and Dan Guerriero this weekend at the Assembly.

Offering Designation: A member of ours has made a generous gift of \$20,000 for use as the Pastor sees fit. It was suggested that \$12,000 of this might go towards Priority Projects. The remainder would be distributed among the Mission Endowment Fund (\$2000), the Youth Gathering next summer (\$3000), Mission trips, and the Current Fund (\$3000). Corey motioned to accept this, and Linda seconded it. Motion carried.

School Kits. Marge shared that five youth volunteered to join Helen's Group to learn how to sew. These girls helped to make bags for the school kits.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2026 at 7:00 P.M.

Adjournment and Prayer: The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 P.M. Linda moved to adjourn and it was seconded by Robin V. Motion carried. The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patti Flach, Council Secretary

JULY VOLUNTEERS 2026

Date	7/5/2026 Outdoor	7/12/2026	7/19/2026	7/26/2026 Outdoor
Acolytes	Lily Johns	Owen Price	Elsa Plank	Jocelyn Thomas
Altar Flowers (\$20/vase)	Tom & Cindy Ayres	Marlene Domhoff	Barb Graham	Pat Painter & Johns
Altar Guild	Pat Capella	Pat Capella	Pat Capella	Pat Capella
Asst. Minister	Ted Lindgren II	Karen Ferrari	Teresa O'Malley	Robin VanDyke
Bell Ringer	Joe Ludwik	Austin Schmidt	Adam Price	Josh Green
Eternal Candle (\$15)	Marlene Domhoff	Marlene Domhoff	Marlene Domhoff	Marlene Domhoff
Greeters	Patti & Charlie Flach	Faye Dawn Nelson & Kim Sharrar	Robin & Jason Plank	Mary Jane & Heinie Raupp
Lector	Teresa O'Malley	Patti Flach	Vic Pepper	Deb Mort
Nursery	Linda Schmidt	Teresa O'Malley	Danielle Johns	Staci Bettencourt
Offering Counters	Rob Burr & Robin VanDyke	Rob Burr & Robin VanDyke	Rob Burr & Robin VanDyke	Rob Burr & Robin VanDyke
Tech Support	Adam Price	Heidi Beahm	Adam Price	Heidi Beahm
Ushers	Tom & Cindy Ayres	Danielle & Brian Johns	Joe Ludwik & Dean Zinkhann	Brenda & Vic Pepper

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Calendar & Birthdays

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1 9am - E.C. Ministerium 10am - Community 6:30pm - Softball at MAC	2 10am - Quilters Group	3 12pm - 500 Club & Lunch	4
5 9:15am - Summer Book 10:15am - Worship	6 6:15pm - Softball at ML 7pm - Boy Scouts	7 9am - Pr. Cluster -Zelie. 7pm - Property Mtg.	8 10am - Community 12pm - Lunch Bunch	9 10am - Quilters Group 6:15pm - Softball at ML	10	11 12pm - Luther Hall
12 9:15am - Summer Book 10:15am - Worship 11:45am - Pack Up Food	13 6:30pm - Softball at MAC 7pm - Boy Scouts	14 10am - Helen's Helpers	15 10am - Community	16 10am - Quilters Group	17	18 6:30pm - Game Night
19 SPY Mission Trip 9:15am - Summer Book 10:15am - Worship 11:30am - Peach Potluck	20 7pm - Boy Scouts	21	22 10am - Community	23 10am - Quilters Group	24	25
26 9:15am - Summer Book 10:15am - Worship	27 7pm - Boy Scouts	28 7pm - Dorcas Circle	29 10am - Community	30 10am - Quilters Group	31	1



We welcome you

If you ever wonder about any of the events or projects that you hear about under the umbrella of W/ELCA or Circle or our St. Peter's church women, please ask one of us. We encourage you to join us for the various activities we do throughout each month and we are interested in trying new things to bring us together as sisters in Christ, so please don't hesitate to talk to us about ways you might like to be involved.

Looking ahead...

7/28 – Circle Bible Study and dessert
8/6 – Lunch and stringing bags
8/28 – Women's Bunko Night
SWPA & NWPA RETREAT: SEP. 25-27



St. Peter's Church Family Wishes Many Blessings to You

1 Trista Weir	15 Davin Beahm Sr.
4 Peyton Weber	16 Marlene Domhoff
5 Pat Capella	18 Heidi Beahm
8 Garrie Wearing	24 Anna Plank
9 Paige Lindgren	25 Alyssa Barnhart
11 Angie Banyay	29 Owen Price
12 Linda Powlus	30 Eilene Budisky
12 Hudson Kenney	30 Kierstin Beahm
13 Quinn Green	30 Tyler Barron

St. Peter's
Lutheran Church

202 Van Buren St.
Evans City, PA
16033

Call us: 724-538-5810

E-mail us
stpeterslcec@zoominternet.net

God's Son



Never Fails

Website:

www.stpeterslutheranevanscity.org



Our Staff:

Pastor Brandon Johns

Heidi Beahm,
After School Director

Marlene Domhoff,
Organist / Music Director

Joe Ludwik, *Sexton*

Christine Johns,
Secretary

- **The Sunday Bulletin Deadline is Wednesdays at 10 am**
- **Monthly Newsletter Deadline is the 3rd Sunday of each month**
- **Summer Book Study: 9:15 am (Sundays in July)**
- **Weekly Worship Services:
Sundays at 10:15 am**
- **Check Our Weekly Calendar of other events.**
- **Summer Office Hours
M-W-F (9am—noon)**



*As we have been blessed,
Let us be a blessing to others.*